

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EG

SUBJECT: BOSTON GLOBE STORY ON C-130S FOR EGYPT

1. ON FEBRUARY 1 BOSTON GLOBE PRINTED ARTICLE BY WILLIAM BEECHER UNDER HEADLINE "US REPORTEDLY OK'S PLANE SALE TO EGYPT". GLOBE STORY BEING CARRIED IN WIRELESS FILE. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S USE FEBRUARY 2 AND CAN BE DRAWN UPON IN YOUR DISCRETION IF NECESSARY IN RESPONDING TO PRIVATE QUERIES. IN RESPONSE TO ANY PRESS QUERIES, HOWEVER, YOU SHOULD SAY THAT ALL COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT WILL BE MADE IN WASHINGTON.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

Q. IS IT TRUE, AS REPORTED OVER THE WEEKEND, THAT THE FORD ADMINISTRATION HAS DECIDED TO SELL SIX C-130 MILITARY TRANSPORT PLANES TO EGYPT?

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A. LET ME REMIND YOU THAT AT THE TIME OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S

VISIT, WE MADE CLEAR THAT WE WOULD CONSULT THE CONGRESS BEFORE SELLING MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO EGYPT. IT IS TRUE THAT THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD US IT WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE C-130S, BUT NO US GOVERNMENT DECISION ON A MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH EGYPT WILL BE TAKEN WITHOUT

THOROUGH CONSULTATION WITH CONGRESS. WHILE THIS IS CLEAR TO THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT, WE HAVE ALSO TOLD THEM THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE EGYPTIAN DESIRE TO PURCHASE SOME KINDS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES, AND SUCH DISCUSSIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE FROM TIME TO TIME. I REPEAT, HOWEVER, A DECISION IS DEPENDENT UPON CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS.

Q. WELL, HAVE YOU TAKEN AN INFORMAL DECISION AND KEPT IT SECRET DURING ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER RABIN'S VISIT?

A. THE SITUATION IS AS I HAVE JUST DESCRIBED IT. IT FOLLOWS THAT THERE IS NO DECISION TO KEEP SECRET.

Q. YOU SAY CONVERSATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE--WHERE AND WITH WHOM?

A. I CANNOT GET INTO DETAILS. ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT CONVERSATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE, AND ALSO NOTE THAT PRESIDENT SADAT HIMSELF HAS DISCUSSED HIS DESIRE FOR SOME TYPES OF AMERICAN MILITARY EQUIPMENT WITH VISITING CONGRESSMEN. OUR CONSIDERATION OF THIS MATTER CONTINUES, AND AS WE CONSIDER IT WE WILL BE CARRYING OUT CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS.

Q. IS IT TRUE THAT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAS MADE THE DECISION, BUT THAT YOU ARE NOT GOING FORWARD WITH IT UNTIL CONGRESS HAS BEEN INFORMED?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO GET INTO DELIBERATIONS WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. WHAT WE HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY STILL HOLDS--A DECISION TO GO FORWARD WITH A MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH EGYPT IS DEPENDENT UPON PRIOR CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS. WHATEVER WE DECIDE TO DO WILL BE DONE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN CONSULTATION WITH CONGRESS.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE STATEMENT IN THE STORY THAT THE C-130S SUPPLY IS ONLY ONE OF A DOZEN CATEGORIES OF MILITARY SUPPLY AND TRAINING YOU ARE CONSIDERING FOR EGYPT?

A. I REALLY HAVE NOTHING MORE FOR YOU ON THIS MATTER. THE EGYPTIANS HAVE INDICATED A NUMBER OF ITEMS WHICH THEY

WOULD BE INTERESTED IN BUYING, BUT THEY HAVE NOT PRESENTED
ANY FORMAL SHOPPING LIST AS PRESIDENT SADAT HIMSELF SAID
WHEN HE WAS HERE. WE ARE STILL CONSIDERING THE WHOLE
MATTER OF A MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH EGYPT, AND I
AM NOT GOING TO GET INTO DETAILS. AS I HAVE SAID,
DECISIONS ARE DEPENDENT UPON CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS.
END TEXT. INGERSOLL

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